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Regina Silsby's Secret War



Synopsis

The daughter of a wealthy ship owner uses the superstitions of the day to divert the British forces and support the Sons of Liberty following the Boston Tea Party.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 670L (What's this?)

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

I am not a fan of either historical fiction or ghost stories. But to my pleasant surprise, Thomas J. Brodeur's novel "Regina Silsby's Secret War" is a very satisfying combination of both. And at the risk of overburdening this book, it's also a lively look at feminist empowerment, early-American style. That third aspect is embodied in Rachel Winslow, the story's heroine. The novel begins on the night of the Boston Tea Party, at which Rachel ends up being an innocent bystander. Of course, the redcoats are out to catch all bystanders, innocent or not. Two of the redcoats pursue Rachel from the scene of the event. Suddenly, Rachel is saved by a ghost, as it were. A redcoat's boot catches upon the tombstone of Regina Silsby, known thirty years after her death as an evil sorceress who tries to drag live souls down to the grave with her. The redcoat escapes and flees for his life, causing Rachel to wonder if she really was helped by Regina's spirit. When things continue to get worse for Boston patriots, Rachel takes it upon herself to be Regina Silsby, at least inasmuch as it will help the patriots' cause. A few of the story's elements seem lifted from the recent Mel Gibson movie "The Patriot"--particularly the arrogant British soldier who pursues a flighty patriot, and the

humbler superior officer who realizes that the Britons' tide is turning. The novel's masterstroke is to show how Rachel becomes emboldened by her alter-ego, in an era when women were expected to be homebodies who dared not speak one whit of their minds. All at once, Rachel/Regina becomes a hero for the patriots' cause and a scourge to the British, who cringe to see their intimidating tactics being undone by a woman, ghost or not. With richness of character and dialogue, Brodeur captures perfectly the atmosphere of early Americans chafing against British oppression. And as in "The Patriot," a former pacifist is spurred by circumstances to find more strength than she realized she had. It's a rousing read for all ages.

I recently read "Regina Silsby's Secret War" as a primer to reading it with my 10 year old daughter and got hooked!! The vocabulary is rich, the pace is fast, and the entire story is extremely believable and engaging. My 10 year old daughter is now reading it and is thrilled with the antics and courage of Rachel, the main character. She's also excited about how well the plot ties in with her recent history lessons about the Boston Tea Party, Stamp Act, Quartering Act and the other Intolerable Acts. Kudos to Thomas Brodeur for an extremely well written book that's fun to read for kids and adults!

[...] This book is a must-read and must-have for any reader's collection. It is set in the Boston Tea Party-period, and Rachel Winslow is the very likable heroine who has a clever plan of disguising herself as a ghost...but I will not give it all away, you must read the book for yourself. The writing is so elaborate, you feel as if you were really there in the story, thanks to the vivid expressions, imagery, and vocabulary. You will really enjoy this book if you buy it, so get your copy today!

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. A wonderful adventure, the book is intrigue and mystery from the start. I'm an avid reader. Regina Silsby's Secret War held my interest and contained several unanticipated plot twists which was a pleasant surprise. Historical details are woven into the story as support for the plot rather than as a boring history lesson. The characters are well developed and believable. Rachel/Regina is a positive role model for any girl 9 to 90. To help her friends and family, she faces many challenges and obstacles. Yet, despite the odds against her and the expectations of colonial society, she rises up and meets each one by faith and determination. Guys, don't pass this book by simply because the main character is a girl. It has enough adventure - cannons, muskets, evading capture - that you nearly forget Rachel's not a guy. I do and would recommend this book to everyone and am looking forward to reading other books by Mr. Brodeur.

My kids and I love the Regina Silsby books. They are very exciting plots with lots of suspense. I love how effortlessly the historical detail is woven through the storyline, and we soak it in without any effort. As a follower of Christ, I also appreciate how the faith of the main character and her family are demonstrated. Teachable moments for my family.

An intriguing read for teens--and perhaps their parents--about pre-Revolution Boston.

Sixteen-year-old Rachel Winslow takes on the ghostly guise of her great-aunt Regina Silsby to fight the British acts of tyranny. She tricks British soldiers, frees prisoners, and confounds a certain spoiled redcoat captain, leaving Boston believing that Regina's spirit truly haunts the city. In the mean time, while she tromps around as the ghost of her great-aunt, Rachel wonders what the truth is about the real Regina Silsby. Was Regina a witch, as the gossips say--or a devoted Christian? Did she practice things darker than the organ in King's Chapel, or was she simply pouring out her soul to God through music as she mourned her dead fiance? Rachel investigates and discovers that all the superstitions of the townspeople are for nothing. Regina Silsby was a godly young woman who died a tragic death. Rachel sees the damage to a person's reputation that idle gossip about the supernatural can do, and she rejects the untruthful stories. However, Rachel is left with another problem--a spoiled British captain is determined to make the so-called ghost pay for humiliating him....

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